

**Amendments to the Specification:**

Please replace "45" with --46-- at page 5, line 14 with the following amended paragraph:

The instrument 11 includes a plurality of strings 43 which can be strummed in a conventional manner to produce sound. Each of the strings 43 has a first end 44 secured to a different one of the tuning screws 24 (Fig. 1) and a second end 45 retained by a different counterbore 38 of the block 31 (Figs. 3 and 4). The second ends 45 are formed by enlarged balls so as to prevent their passage through the channels 34. Between the tuning mechanism 14 and the block 31 the strings pass over the pickups 22 and are diverted by the bridge 23 through a slot ~~[[45]]~~ 46 extending into the body 16 and intersecting the cavity 39.